

Client:

Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches & The Cane River Heritage Area Commission

Melrose Plantation is a core historic site in the newly formed Heritage Area. Its is directly linked to the progenators of the Cane River Creoles of Color, the site of a early 20th century artist and writers colony, and home plantation to Clementine Hunter, one of the most famous African-American Folk Artist of the 20th century.

Reference Contact:

Nancy Morgan, Executive Director
The Cane River Heritage Area Commission
P.O. Box 1201
Natchitoches LA 71458
(318) 356-5555



Project Staff:

Blake Hayes, Project Manager
Tom Elliott, Audience/Market Analysis
Katie Boardman, Interpretive Programs Planner

Project Approach:

Through a review of organizational structure and mission, daily operations, current research and resources, and discussions with local stakeholders, assessments were made of site operations, current and potential audiences, and interpretive offerings. An Interpretation Framework identified and structured key topics and storylines to be

developed into interpretive themes and focused attention on the uniquely significant material and expressive culture. The plan sought strategies for increasing existing audience segments and serving new audiences with site-unique messages that also share key elements of the Cane River story presented at other historic sites in the heritage corridor open to the public.

Project Outcomes:

The Interpretation Plan defined five core themes for public presentation, all associated with “Cultural identity and Cultural Expression”. The plan included specific ideas for daily interpretation and targeted educational programs. It also examined the operation impact of these programs and the facilities development that will need to occur to achieve them. The Cherry Valley Group recommended that the APHN restructure its organization to place greater emphasis on the operation of its Historic Sites and their public presentation needs. As a result the APHN established the new position of Director of Historic Sites.

